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LANCASTER COUNTY  
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**2013 LANCASTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

**1. Oppose Elimination of Inheritance Tax**

Elimination of the inheritance tax would have a devastating effect on Lancaster County. In FY 2010-11 Lancaster County collected \$6,685,528 of inheritance tax, the equivalent of a 3.5¢ property tax levy and almost 14% of the entire property tax levy for that budget year. In FY 2011-12 the County collected \$8,185,277 of inheritance tax, the equivalent of a 4.3¢ levy and 17% of the entire levy.

**2. Support Expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act**

Lancaster County expends over \$2 million a year for General Assistance medical services. If Medicaid is expanded under the Affordable Care Act, virtually all of these medical services would be covered by Medicaid.

**3. Eliminate Responsibility of Counties to Pay HHS rent**

When the State assumed responsibility for welfare, a legislative provision was added requiring counties to maintain facilities for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as they existed on April 1, 1983. See Neb. Rev. Stat. §68-130. Although some relief from this antiquated statute was provided in 2011 Neb. Laws LB 234 (allowing payment reductions for HHS space eliminated since 1983 and determining whether additional space can be eliminated), the use of local property tax to pay for HHS facilities should be eliminated in its entirety. This is especially true in light of the State's total elimination of state aid to counties.

**4. Modify Right to Court Appointed Attorney in Juvenile Court**

The increasing cost of court appointed attorneys is a major concern to the Lancaster County Board. This cost can be lowered by reducing the number of appointments through a statutory change clarifying that non-custodial parents, parents against whom there are no allegations filed, or even custodians of children who have no legal relationship to the children do not have the right to a court appointed attorney.

**5. Definition and Oversight for Staff Secure Juvenile Detention Facilities**

Lancaster County has successfully operated a staff secure facility for preadjudicated juvenile detention since February of 2002. Staff secure detention provides an ideal solution for low-risk law violators and status offenders. Although the Nebraska Juvenile Code specifically refers to staff secure facilities as an authorized type of non-secure detention, there are no statutory provisions defining these facilities or how they should be regulated. Given the function of staff secure detention, the County believes general oversight should be placed with the Jail Standards Division of the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement.